



IN TIME

Ely U3A History Group Members'
Newsletter



Edition 4

23rd April 2020

We have a varied selection of articles this week from the wild west to Victorian nobility, Neolithic remains and bravery in Ireland. I suspect this newsletter will be being sent to you for quite a few more weeks so for those of you inclined to put pen to paper or rather fingers to keyboard please keep your articles coming. [REDACTED]

Memories rekindled - Jim Orr

Maggie Haverson's article on old sewing machines brought back memories of a story told to me by my grandparents, Jim & Jeannie Orr, when I was growing up in Belfast. They married in 1921, the year when the partitioning of Ireland took place leading to civil war between nationalists and unionists. Shortly after they moved into their home together they received an evening visit from the notorious Black & Tans, a para-military force established by the UK government to counter community violence. Their methods however were far from peaceful and a visit from them was not to be trifled with.

My grandmother had been a milliner before marrying and had a treadle sewing machine in the living room. The 'Tans' carried out a detailed search of the house for weapons and explosives during which my grandmother leant against her sewing machine stand. It was a relief when the searchers left without discovering any weapons, as my grandfather had a revolver hidden in the drawer of the sewing machine table. My grandfather had joined the banned Ulster Volunteer Force in 1914 along with many Unionists and must have obtained the firearm through the organisation. Apparently the raid was made as the authorities believed the former occupants of the house were members of the IRA. Not having a licence for the firearm it would have been a dangerous situation if it had come to light during the search. Strange the uses sewing machines can be used for!



Roy Rogers came into the shop today - Heather Carruth



"Roy Rogers came into the shop today", my Dad said. It was 1954, I was 7 and thanks to Roy I longed to be a cow-girl. "I suppose Trigger (Roy's horse) came too", I turned to watch my oldest sister, a flame haired teenager, noted for her sarcasm and air of first-born superiority. "As a matter of fact, he did", my father replied, tossing the evening newspaper onto the table, carefully folded to reveal a photo of Roy and Trigger exiting the shop.

Roy was not the first "celebrity" to visit the family gunsmith's in Sheffield. The larger than life Buffalo Bill bought blanks and spares when his circus came to town (1891 & 1903) bringing with him Annie

Oakley, who presented some of her famous coloured targets to my grandfather. Annie's glass spheres enjoyed pride of place in the shop until the premises took a direct hit in the Sheffield Blitz.

Over a hundred years after the three's last meeting, my husband and I travelled across America on an "end of the tunnel - here comes retirement" trip, including a visit to "Bill's" grave. We discovered that even in death, flamboyant Bill had proved a divisive influence; his body fought over by two neighbouring towns each wanting to host it, sure its presence would attract tourists and their money. The body had been buried at the Indian Trading post on Look Out Mountain, high above Golden, Colorado, so several tons of concrete were then poured on top so no one could steal it.

Looking out from the site towards Golden and it's giant 7 mile long Coor's brewery, we thought how ironic that the whisky drinking showman should end up surrounded by so much beer; pretty sure he'd turn in his grave; if it weren't for all that concrete.



Petty's Pick of the week

How amazing that in the same week we received Heather's article on Roy Rogers there should also be an article on him posted by Mike Petty.

Roy Rogers rides in – Cinema This story appeared in a Cambridge newspaper on April 17th 1954.



A new experiment in children's entertainment, the Roy Rogers Riders Club, is being launched at the Rex Cinema, Cambridge.

It will be among the first British cinemas to use the scheme which provides first-rate Saturday morning entertainment for the under 16s.

The charge for enrolment and a badge is 1s and admission to the shows is 6d per week.

The clubs are under the direct guidance of Roy Rogers himself who formulated the club rules; its objects are to ensure that young cinemagoers see

only the most wholesome entertainment and meetings begin with a special film of Roy Rogers saying the "cowboy's prayer"

The Devil's Holes - Maggie Haverson

The Devil's Holes or Grime's quarries is what our Anglo Saxon Ancestors called Grimes Graves, the 360 mysterious depressions that can be found on the Norfolk Brecklands not far from Thetford. Grim was the name of their pagan god or devil. The depressions are in fact the in-filled shafts of old Neolithic flint





mines and the site is well worth a visit if you have not seen it.

The mines were dug over 4000 years ago to extract flint – vital to stone age life for weapons for hunting, axes and implements for domestic use. Flint can easily be chipped to produce tools with sharp cutting edges. It occurs naturally in chalk, often in layers. Over a period of about 500 years miners at Grimes Graves created the largest flint

extraction site known in Briton – an area covering 37 acres.

Some pits reached a depth of 12 meters and were between 4-8 meters in diameter. They were dug to just below the flint level, and galleries radiating out from the bottom of the shaft were then dug following the flint band and allowing the miners to extract the flint. All of this was done with red deer antler pick axes. It is thought that the flint was roughly worked on site and then possibly traded elsewhere to be finished and polished.

Grime's Graves was first extensively explored by the archaeologist [William Greenwell](#) in 1868. The site is now owned by English Heritage and it is possible to go down one of the now excavated pits



[Walburga, Lady Paget \(Part I\) - Ian Forrest](#)



Countess Walburga Ehrengarda Helena von Hohenthal was born in Berlin, in 1839, the daughter of an Austrian count. As a young teenager she became maid of honour to the Crown Princess of Germany, the eldest daughter of Queen Victoria, mother of the Kaiser (Walberga said his manners were atrocious!) At the German court she met and fell in love with Augustus Berkeley Paget.

His uncle was Henry Paget, First Marquess of Anglesey who, at Waterloo, according to an anecdote, was close to

Wellington when his leg was hit, and exclaimed, "By God, sir, I've lost my leg!" — To which Wellington replied, "By God, sir, so you have!". Augustus and Walburga married in 1860.

Before the wedding the German household came to London and Walburga met Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at Windsor. At dinner that evening she was seated next to Lord Palmerston who regaled her with embarrassing questions and risqué stories. A vulgar man she



declared. She and Augustus were leaving for his new appointment as Minister at Copenhagen, but Queen Victoria took her to one side and confided that she and Albert were looking for a wife for her wayward son, the Prince of Wales. Could Walberga find a wife for him?

From Copenhagen she corresponded with the royal couple over the attributes required in the women who would eventually become the Queen of England. After much searching Walburga met and decided that Alexandra Princess of Denmark, daughter of Prince Christian, future King of Denmark, was suitable. After many worries, disappointments, political soundings and inspections the two royal families met in Brussels. Everyone was satisfied and the Prince of Wales proposed to Alex the next day. Walburga went to the wedding and whenever she and her husband were in England they were expected to visit the Queen.

Lady Paget knew many of the movers and shakers of that period including King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, King Louis Phillipe of France, King Victor Emmanuel of Italy, Princess Mary of Cambridge (later to become Queen Mary), Alfred Austin the Poet Laureate and many of the Rothschilds. After a posting to Portugal, Augustus was appointed British Consulate to Italy at its then capital Florence in 1867. In 1870 when Rome became the new capital of Italy, Lady Paget arranged for the British embassy to be established at the Villa Torlonia in Rome. In January 1884 Augustus became ambassador to Austria in Vienna. He retired from that post in July 1983 and died on 11 July 1896.

To be continued..... When some family connections will be revealed!